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17 December 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL PATLAND

SUBJECT: WS-117L Planning

1. After hearing the presentation by the 117L Program Office last Saturday, I am concerned that there may be less than a desirable amount of coordination between their plans and our present situation. I thought it would be well to provide you with some gross comments along this line.

2. First is their requirement for boosters. While it is quite true that the Z1-65 program finds itself with a greater number of boosters than we now plan to use, the main reason that these are surplus is our inability to efficiently and profitably complete and use them. Accordingly, we are in the midst of a planning exercise right now to reduce our production program, essentially eliminating all spare boosters. It is true that even so there probably Series "A" missiles will remain. Planning of this, however, is very dangerous since they are very early missiles and quite possibly will be required to fulfill their role as standbys during the Z1-65 test program.

3. For some time now we have continued to carry on our production charts four Series "C" missiles above and beyond the requirements for the Z1-65. These are indicated on the control room charts as being unassigned, although during our recent Washington briefing they were included in the Flight Test Program. At Colonel Starbuck's direction these were not eliminated in order that some cushion may exist for the 117L program. We are rapidly approaching the point where we should firmly assign these missiles or cancel them.

4. Colonel Oder indicated that their orbiting vehicle would weigh 9300 pounds and that a structural analysis of the 65 indicated that this was satisfactory. While this may be true for the present configuration, a CD is today being issued which will authorize Convair to reduce skin gages and hence structural strength to a minimum consistent with the Z1-65 requirements. This change is imperative for many considerations but will seriously decrease the capability of the missile to support a 9300-pound pay load.

5. Although I do not understand it in detail, Colonel Oder mentioned the use of AC Guidance rather than CI Guidance for missiles

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used by them. On the surface this sounds quite simple; but with the inevitable increased engineering and modification loads, I do not see how we can afford this very early in the program.

6. Perhaps the greatest conflict occurs in the facilities area both at Patrick and at Camp Cooke. The planning we are presently doing is in practically all cases limited by facilities and the need for modification thereof as we change series or tests within series. To consider additional wholesale modifications, much less diversion to another program during the critical phases of the Flight Test Program, is impossible. At Camp Cooke I will only point out that to deliver the plan presented Saturday would vitiate our statements that we in fact have an initial operational capability and would seriously degrade our training program.

7. Summarized, the problem looks to me as follows: The 107A-1 Program is in a state of potential slippage for a variety of reasons--equipment deliveries, subsystem deliveries, engineering time, facilities, and funds. We are continually striving to meet our critical dates despite these difficulties. To do so requires unloading the contractors in less essential areas and above all to maintain considerable flexibility as new difficulties are discovered. Although I recognize the difficulties facing the 117L program, it is my considered judgment that adoption of the test plan outlined by the Saturday would do disrupt both programs that neither could be completed within anything approximating the present time scales. Without meaning to be a "dog in the manger" I strongly urge that no hardware be planned for diversion to the 117L program prior to mid-1958 and that no flights using XM-65 hardware be accomplished prior to January 1959.

SIGNED
OTTO J. GLASSER
Colonel, USAF
Assistant for WS-107A-1

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